

REMARKS

A reconsideration of the Final Rejection of June 4, 2003 is respectfully request.

The informalities in Claim 12 noted by the Examiner have been addressed and a withdrawal of the informality rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 12-17 have been finally rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over the art cited and reasons made of record with respect to original Claims 1-11 in the Office Action of October 1, 2002. The Examiner has held that the claims are not restricted to purely amidic cross linkage, as Applicant has argued but, as presented do not exclude other cross links.

For this reason, the Examiner has held that the claims are not patentably distinct over the cited art.

It is acknowledged that the original language of Claim 12, particularly the first several lines, might unintentionally lead to the conclusion expressed by the Examiner, notwithstanding that the steps of the process defined in the remainder of the claim can only yield polysaccharides cross-linked solely with amide bonds derived from the reaction of carboxy groups present in the starting polysaccharide and a polyamine. The final product does not contain any carboxy groups. To eliminate any doubt and to further emphasize that the process claimed is limited to the preparation of purely amidic cross-linked polysaccharides only, Claim 12 has been appropriately reworded in the first two lines

to accurately define what is obtained by the stated steps of the claim.

It is respectfully submitted that the proposed amendment overcomes the reason for the continued reliance on the Section 103(a) rejection. Accordingly, a withdrawal of the rejection and an allowance of the claims is respectfully requested. Absent the issuance of a Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is requested to enter the Amendment so that an appeal may be taken from the final rejection of the claims in the form as proposed by this Amendment.

An early action leading to the issuance of a Notice of Allowance, or the entry of Amendment for purposes of appeal..., is respectfully urged

Respectfully submitted,



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